2 Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

264 "When we work in the fields we eat five times daily: as soon as we reach the place we have a light lunch *(zakuska)*, at nine we have the *ruchok*, at one dinner, at five another *zakuska*, and in the evening after finishing work we have supper. We older people don't eat between meals but let the children do so if they are hungry."

262 252 From time to time during my stay in the village I tried to teach the tavern cook some simple and uncomplicated western dish to vary the biting peasant food. She tried faithfully but unsuccessfully to comply. After one such hopeless but courteous attempt she read me a little lesson in village menus:

"We Dragalevtsy people are pretty conservative in everything and have added no new dishes to our menu. The western combinations which people eat in Sofia are tasteless and slimy. If one doesn't use lots of salt, hot pepper, and vinegar, then the food has no taste at all."

273 Beverages other than milk and wine made little appeal. Wine was much in evidence on holidays or when there were guests. An average village home would use from 250 to 300 quarts of wine a year. Most of the *rakiya* was drunk either at the taverns or on festive occasions. In commenting on the liquor consumption of the village one man said:

"We are not such fools as not to drink wine, for the wine is transformed into blood and gives strength to man."

000 Someone has said that a house does not become a home until it knows a birth, a wedding, and a death. In other words, it is more than plaster walls, crude furniture, and steaming food. It is even more an association of memories deeply rooted in family crises.

844 [591] A frequently recurring crisis in Dragalevtsy was childbirth, which always took place in a home, never in a hospital. Usually it was the home in which the couple lived, for only rarely did the wife return to her paternal home for the event. When a woman learned that she was pregnant, she told the fact only to her own mother and to her husband, embarrassment preventing further disclosure. The mother-in-law learned about it a month later, for in the words of one of the older village men:

843 [606]

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EEl Bulgaria EEl

843 [606]

"She always looks at the undershirts of the daughter-in-law that are to be washed, and so draws the conclusion that leads her to ask the younger woman in the conventional phrase, 'Something's going to happen, isn't it?' The daughter-in-law becomes very embarrassed and does not say anything until the older woman assures her that it is something perfectly natural and something which she herself has experienced. Then the daughter-in-law will answer, 'Well, I don't know. Maybe there is such a thing as you suggest.' So pregnancy," concluded this informant, "is considered rather immoral and women are embarrassed to tell the others about it."

Because of the shyness and innate modesty of the Dragalevtsy matron, remarkable traits in view of the crowded living conditions, I found it helpful to supplement and check the information given by men in this connection. Miss Petrana Peneva, of the American College, rendered invaluable aid in interviewing the women.

No special prenatal care was given to the mother in spite of the efforts on the part of the doctor to get such women to come for advice. The villagers know that the mother-to-be must not bend much nor lift heavy things. They also told her not to jump over a dog, "because the child would then have a hoarse voice or no voice at all." Generally she was given whatever she asked for on the grounds that "if she is not satisfied, there is danger that the baby in her will die." One day I attended a carding *sedenka,* which was a gathering of about twenty women in one of the homes to help the hostess card her wool. I noticed that one woman, obviously pregnant, tasted the stew being prepared for dinner in the entryway each time she passed it. I was given two reasons for this: "She better than anyone else present could judge the correctness of the seasoning" and "If she did not taste of the food each time she passed, she would have a miscarriage." Yet custom did not allow the expectant mother to eat fresh fish because "the nose of the baby will be closed [adenoids]"; nor could she drink from a pail of water for fear that the baby if a boy would be born with swollen sex organs. But, other than these practices and prohibitions, little fuss was made over the expectant mother. No special prayers were said for her nor were any special services held. "The woman is born

2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

178 606 596 A daughter-in-law especially disliked to live as a stranger in her husband's paternal home subject to the will of the parents-in-law. Time and time again I heard this opinion clumsily but definitely expressed:

"The large families started to break up after the wars. The chief reason for that was the daughter-in-law. Many of them come from different places and even if they come from the same village, they begin to care more for their own children and to make things for them without the knowledge of the others with whom they are living. This brings trouble among them and so they quarrel. Then they talk to their husbands; finally the brothers, although they love one another, have to separate in order to be at peace."

178 596 Ordinarily most men felt that conditions were better before the separation, though the women were more content apart. Ill will and distrust also grew up between the members of the family when some of them who worked as day laborers failed to hand over their entire earnings to the common treasury. In the villages around Sofia several brothers rarely lived together with undivided possessions after the death of their father as they would have done in the days of the zadruga. During 1935, a record year for the division of families in Dragalevtsy, there were 9 cases of estates being broken up, 3 of them the result of the separation of son and father and the remaining 6 involving the separation of brothers. When a large family divided, the younger brother usually remained in the old homestead and assumed the care of the parents.

594 178 551 This change from the large patriarchal family to the small conjugal family was having consequences which few of the peasants realized.[1] For one thing, in comparison with the larger group, the conjugal family, which consists of parents and their unmarried children, has a short life. It ends, in a sense, with the death of one of the marriage partners. This especially affects the rearing of children, who in the olden days grew up with such a bevy of cousins that a special middle name was useful in identifying each child with his particular parents. More specifically each child received a "small" or given name selected by his godparents; as a middle name he automatically added to his father's given name an *ev* or *ov* ("the son of") or, if a girl, an *eva* or *ova* ("the daughter of"). As a last name he

[1] [Cf pp. 65-69, category 116--Analyst]

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

With women it was quite different, since marriage for them called for major adjustments. Not only did the wife have to become accustomed to the demands and habits of her husband, but she also had to fit into the routine of her husband's parental home. In some cases she had to subordinate herself to other daughters-in-law in the household. Should she and her husband live in a separate dwelling near the husband's childhood homestead, she still was so subject to the scrutiny of the in-laws that she found it expedient to conform to their ways of doing things.

The woman, much more than the man, had to give up the companionship of her former friends to move in the group of the married women of the neighborhood. In these groups she was initiated into much of the folklore about anatomy, conception, childbirth, and child care. The frank discussion by various women of their personal experiences was enough to make any squeamish girl terrified at the very thought of becoming a mother. Continued discussion, however, made the experience eventually seem less of an ordeal; in fact, it was often a source of comfort and encouragement when her time arrived.

These neighborhood gossiping groups did much more than shock the girl into some of the realities of married life; they also informed her of the personal peculiarities of her in-laws and neighbors; they let her know what she should and should not do. And if she was one of the first of her circle of friends to marry, she could look forward to the day when one or two of them would become brides in the vicinity and could join her in the company of these older married women.

The role of these women's groups in the village was interesting and far more important than the surface informality would indicate. Recreation for the older women was generally tied up with work. Distinctions, however, should be made between the women's work groups, such as those for spinning and carding, and women's gossiping groups, in spite of the fact that the membership was the same in both groups and that gossiping was the chief recreation in both instances. In the work groups, the women were invited formally by the hostess, were fed, and were expected to stay most of the day, definitely to work. Gossiping groups, however, were much more informal, since people

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

complaint the women made against drinking was economic, the spending of money "for nothing," as they said. 000

Husbands and wives also disagreed frequently over the importance of a certain task, since the husband was likely to order the wife to work in the field when she felt it necessary to complete some task at the house. Money was often a source of conflict. Since all the villagers were members of the same church they rarely argued about religion, the few discussions which did arise being about the desirability or undesirability of church attendance. One of the most significant results of this study of village families was to show how little disagreement there was concerning in-laws, since husband and wife usually stood together as a unit against these outsiders, whether they belonged to her family, his family, or had married their son or daughter. 593 [771] [606]

In spite of these quarrels about discipline, drink, and jobs to be done, most couples considered their marital venture highly successful. I believe that an important reason for the success of marriage in Dragalevtsy was the recognition on the part of husband and wife that even love was not an answer to all of life's problems. They took each day's pleasures and disappointments as they came, rejoicing or sorrowing in quiet unison.

Many times as I listened to the husband or wife gravely narrating with satisfaction and pride the calm and uneventful story of their marriage partnership, details of the room in which we were sitting would strike me with such force that I had to recall myself with an effort to the conversation. We always sat in the best room; sometimes it was the only room. It was always the room where the family lived. The chief furniture was a bed, perhaps two or even three beds. And here two or three couples and their children spent their days and nights. I would try to imagine married life under such circumstances. [342]

Life of any kind became not merely a matter of privacy, but really a problem of where to carry on the necessary daily activities without getting in another's way. And yet, in most of these crowded households the marriage bond had grown strong. If there was no actual happiness, I often saw a friendly contentment and a mutual regard, particularly as the couple grew older and could look back upon years of joint achievement.

2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

between a husband and wife, the proper relative intervened to suggest a way out. Most of the husband's relatives were in the same locality with him and could keep an eye on his behavior.

One was not only tied closely to the husband's blood kin *(rodstvo)* but had to enter upon a formal relationship with one's in-laws. Families related by marriage felt close to each other, the intensity of the feeling depending upon the frequency with which the families met and the way the young couples got along. Ordinarily, however, the family of the bride was considered by the husband's parents to be as close, at times even closer, than blood relatives. For instance, if there was any sort of celebration to which guests were invited, the family of the bride was the first to be asked. One reliable informant estimated that ninety out of one hundred people in Dragalevtsy felt the force of *svatovstvo,* or this relationship springing up through intermarriage. The young people, who are usually so prone to make a break with the past, maintained it in all its vigor. Here was the way one young man explained the *svatovstvo:*

"If my sister married some man in Simeonovo, even though I had never seen him before, his brother and sister would be my *svati,* and if I met them we would feel like cousins. I would never curse them or quarrel with them and would call their father *'dedo'* and their mother *'baba,'* the same names I use for my own grandparents. My parents and the parents of my new brother-in-law would likewise be *svati* and would treat one another reverently." Two brothers could not marry two sisters from another family, though there was no blood relationship, because the second couple were *svati* after the first couple married, and *svati* could not marry. Two brothers could marry two first cousins, but not two sisters. This feeling of closeness in families related by marriage did not stop with the husband and the wife, nor with the single in-law gained by each family. It included, as well, the in-law's parents and brothers and sisters with whom just dealings and proper behavior had always to prevail.

More than anything else, however, the shared activities of husband and wife developed an understanding which lasted through thick and thin. Some of these shared activities were the trip to market, the